

# REGION VII AGING SERVICES

***Cherry Schmidt, Regional Aging Services Program Administrator***

Serving: Burleigh, Morton, Kidder, Grant, McLean, Mercer, Sheridan, Sioux, Emmons, & Oliver Counties



## Spring 2014



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### ***Older Americans Month Theme 2014 Announced***

Each May, the nation celebrates Older Americans Month to recognize older Americans for their contributions and provide them with information to help them stay healthy and active. This year, we are focusing on injury prevention with the theme:

### ***Safe Today, Healthy Tomorrow***

Older adults are at a much higher risk of unintentional injury and even death than the rest of the population. Unintentional injuries to this population result in millions of medically treated injuries and more than 30,000 deaths every year. With a focus on safety during Older Americans Month, the Administration for Community Living plans to use this opportunity to raise awareness about this critical issue. By taking control of their safety, older Americans can live longer, healthier lives.



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**Older Americans Month | May 2014**



## ADRL Prevention Tip

### Healthy Habits for a Healthy You

There is no need to revamp your entire diet and lifestyle to improve your health — even small actions can pay off in a big boost to your health. Check out the ideas below and try the ones that sound right for you.

1. Get your full eight hours. Just as a healthy diet and regular exercise are necessary and important for good health, so is sleep. Cutting back on snooze-time can lead to an out-of-control appetite (some studies show that people who sleep less are more likely to be overweight), a greater risk for coronary heart disease and type 2 diabetes.
2. Rise and shine — and eat. Breakfast gets your body's metabolism going again after a night of sleeping, and gives you the gradual and adequate energy you need to get through the morning.
3. Wash your hands. From banishing cold and flu germs to preventing food borne illnesses, frequent hand-washing is one of the smartest preventive habits you can adopt. Wash your hands with warm water and soap before handling food, eating, or touching your face, and after using the bathroom or coming into contact with potentially contaminated objects such as doorknobs, toys and menus. Be sure to clean the entire surface of your palms and the tops of your hands, as well as under your nails. A thorough hand-washing should take about 20 seconds.
4. Know your family health history. Your family's medical history can give you important information about your own health. Many diseases, such as heart disease, breast cancer, diabetes, and depression, can have a genetic component. The more you know about the health of your relatives, the better informed you'll be about your own risk factors and how to manage them.
5. Eat mindfully. One of the significant differences between people who successfully manage their weight and people who constantly struggle is mindful eating. Turn off the TV or computer, sit down at a table with your food on a plate, and focus on eating. Savor the smell and enjoy the taste. Put your fork down between bites, and take time to really enjoy your meal. Chances are you will eat less and feel more satisfied.
6. Add variety to your diet. Wild salmon and sardines are just a couple of the fish that provide heart-healthy fats such as omega-3, which lower your risk of cardiovascular disease and help preserve your cognitive function. Aim for two servings a week; more than that may add too much mercury to your system. And finally, try to eat 5-7 servings a day of fruits and vegetables, and minimize your intake of carbohydrates.
7. Volunteer. In addition to helping others, volunteers themselves often benefit from "giving back" to the communities in which they live and work, and enjoy a rewarding sense of doing something good for someone else.



8. Maintain strong family and social networks. Research has shown that people who have family and friends they can turn to for support and companionship may be healthier and less likely to experience depression than those who spend most of their time alone. Looking for new friends? Join a club, take a class or volunteer.
9. Take a time out. At least once a day, close your eyes and focus on taking 10 deep, full breaths. Inhale through your nose, feel your diaphragm expand, and exhale through your mouth. Deep, focused breathing slows your heart rate, calms the body and, as a result, calms your mind and reduces stress. Mix in at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least five days a week as well. Choose something you enjoy and will stick to. Recent studies found that brisk walking is just as good for your heart as jogging, or try biking or swimming. You needn't do it all at once; two 15-minute workouts or three 10-minute blocks work equally well.
10. Drink more water to prevent constipation, dehydration, and other related diseases. Whether you drink bottled, filtered, or tap water helps keep your cells hydrated, flushes out toxins, and prevents dehydration.

*(Adapted from Region III Aging Services Newsletter.)*



## **MY NEXT CHAPTER**

I have generally avoided personal comments in the Region VII newsletter. This issue is an exception to that "rule." I have decided to take early retirement from my position with the Department of Human Services, Aging Services Division/WCHSC.

I have enjoyed nearly 20 years with DHS including 16 years as Region VII Aging Services Program Administrator. The past 16 years have been incredibly busy in the world of Aging Services! We saw the addition of Adult Protective Services in the late 1990s; the Family Caregiver Support Program followed shortly after in 2000. Our unit assumed responsibility for licensing of Adult Family Foster Care homes in the early 2000's. A 2009 NCEA grant allowed for the formation of the Region VII Vulnerable Adult Coalition (WCVAC) in Region VII. Supervising the ADRC/L grant from 2009-2013 was an exciting opportunity for me and is the foundation for services in the future.

Along the way, I have been fortunate to encounter people who have mentored me, supported me, befriended me and, of course, challenged me! All of whom I respect and have taught me so much. I appreciate each of you.

Time passes quickly and with that in mind, I want to be available to care for our newest family addition, our 2<sup>nd</sup> granddaughter, who is due to join us in May. The adage is to never retire from something but, instead, retire to something. This will be my "something," or rather, someone!

I leave you with best wishes as this important work continues and as the changes that surely will continue will bring a bright future for services to one of our most valued group of North Dakotans – "we" older adults! *Cherry Schmidt*



# ND Family Caregiver Support Program

## Caring for yourself as a Caregiver

Taking care of yourself is one of the most important things you can do as a caregiver. This could mean asking family members and friends to help out, doing things you enjoy, using adult day care services, or getting help from a local home health care agency. Taking these actions can bring you some relief. It also may help keep you from getting ill or depressed.

## How to Take Care of Yourself

Here are some ways you can take care of yourself:

✓ Ask for help when you need it.	✓ Keep up with your hobbies and interests.
✓ Join a caregiver's support group.	✓ Eat healthy foods.
✓ Take breaks each day.	✓ Get exercise as often as you can.
✓ Spend time with friends.	✓ See your doctor on a regular basis.
✓ Keep your health, legal, and financial information up-to-date.	

## Getting Help

Everyone needs help at times. It's okay to ask for help and to take time for yourself. However, many caregivers find it hard to ask for help.

### You may feel:

- You should be able to do everything yourself.
- That it's not all right to leave the person with someone else.
- No one will help even if you ask.
- You don't have the money to pay someone to watch the person for an hour or two.

### If you have trouble asking for help, try using some of the tips below:

- It's okay to ask for help from family, friends, and others. I don't have to do everything myself.
- Ask people to help out in specific ways like making a meal, visiting the person, or taking the person out for a short time.
- Join a support group to share advice and understanding with other caregivers. You may want to join a support group of caregivers in your area or on the Internet. These groups meet in person or online to share experiences and tips, and to give each other support.
- Call for help from home health care or adult day care services when you need it.
- Use national and local resources to find out how to pay for some of this help.

If you are a veteran or caring for one, the Veterans Administration might be of help to you. To learn more, visit its caregivers' website at: [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov). You might also call its toll-free support line at 1-855-260-3274.

*For more information about the NDFCSP, call the Aging and Disability Resource LINK. Or you may contact Bill Willis, Caregiver Coordinator, at 701-328-8776.*

## **TAX IDENTITY THEFT AWARENESS**

Identity theft is when someone uses your identifying information - your social security number – without your permission to commit fraud such as obtaining loans, credit cards, bogus bank accounts, etc. Tax identity theft happens when someone files a phony tax return using your personal information – social security number – to get a tax refund from the IRS. It also can happen when someone uses your social security number to get a job or claims your child as a dependent on a tax return.

January 13 through January 17, was Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week. “We have seen a significant increase in the number of incidents in our state over the past several years and it is the goal of my office to make North Dakotans aware of tax identity theft,” said Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem. “Being proactive in the prevention of identity theft is less frustrating and time consuming than trying to recover from an actual identity theft.”

According to the Federal Trade Commission, tax identity theft is the most common form of identity theft reported to that agency. The IRS has taken proactive steps to assist consumers who find they have become a victim of tax identity theft. There are several preventative measures that you can take to reduce your chances of becoming a victim.

- Always store cards and documents containing sensitive personal data in a secure place. Sensitive data may include: credit cards, social security card, driver's license, bank account numbers, pre-approved credit applications, address, date of birth, tax records, passports, utility and telephone bills. Shred or tear up all such documents prior to their disposal.
- PINs and passwords should never be written down or revealed to anyone. Choose ones that cannot be easily guessed and change them regularly. When conducting banking or investment transactions over the telephone, make sure that no one can hear you or be in a position to detect your PIN or password as it is being entered.
- Don't leave outgoing mail in your mailbox – it makes it easy for someone to steal your bill payments and use that information to their own advantage. Consider installing a secure mailbox. If you are going on vacation, ask a trusted neighbor to collect your mail each day or have the post office hold your mail until you return.
- Obtain a copy of your credit report regularly to check for fraudulent accounts, false address changes and other fraudulent information. Report all errors to the credit bureau and have them immediately corrected.
- Keep and carry as few credit cards as possible. After completing a credit card transaction, make sure that the card you get back is your own. Tear up the carbon copies. Cancel all unused credit accounts.
- Carefully review all bank and credit card statements, cancelled checks, telephone and utility bills as soon as you get them. Report any discrepancies immediately. If any regularly expected statements do not arrive on time, contact both the post office and your creditors to ensure that your mail isn't being diverted to another location.

- If you applied for a new credit card and it hasn't arrived in the time expected, call the bank or credit card company involved. Report all lost or stolen cards right away.

To lessen the chance you'll be a victim of tax identity theft:

- File your income tax return early in the tax season, if you can, before identity thieves do.
- Use a secure internet connection if you file electronically, or mail your tax return directly from the post office.
- Respond to all mail from the IRS as soon as possible.
- The IRS will not contact you by email, text, or social media. If the IRS needs information from you, they will contact you by mail.
- Shred copies of your tax return, drafts, or calculation sheets you no longer need.

Tax identity theft victims usually find out about the theft when they get a letter from the IRS telling them more than one tax return was filed using their social security number, or the IRS records show they received wages from an employee they don't know.

If tax identity theft happens to you, contact the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit at 1-800-908-4490; the North Dakota Tax Department Taxpayer Services Section at 701-328-1242; and the Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General's office at 1-800-472-2600.

*The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division investigates allegations of fraud in the marketplace. Investigators also mediate individual complaints against businesses. If you have a consumer problem or question, call the Consumer Protection Division at 328-3404, toll-free at 1-800-472-2600, or 1-800-366-6888 (w/TTY). This article and other consumer information is located on our website at [www.ag.nd.gov](http://www.ag.nd.gov).*

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### **Average Cost of Long Term Care – 2014**

The ND Department of Human Services has posted the latest average cost of Long Term Care.

Effective January 1, 2014, the average cost of nursing facility care increases to:

Monthly Rate:	\$7,268.00
Daily Rate:	\$238.94

The average cost of nursing facility care for 2014 is used to determine the penalty period for individuals whose first Medicaid application is received on or after January 1, 2014, and who have made a disqualifying transfer on or after their look-back date. If you have any questions, please contact your local county social services office.

<http://www.state.nd.us/humanservices/policymanuals/home/financialhelp.htm>

# Telephone Numbers to Know

## Regional Aging Services Program Administrators

<b>Region I:</b>	Kayla Fenster	1-800-231-7724
<b>Region II:</b>	MariDon Sorum	1-888-470-6968
<b>Region III:</b>	Mary Weltz	1-888-607-8610
<b>Region IV:</b>	Patricia Soli	1-888-256-6742
<b>Region V:</b>	Sandy Arends	1-888-342-4900
<b>Region VI:</b>	Danelle Van Zinderen	1-800-260-1310
<b>Region VII:</b>	Cherry Schmidt	1-888-328-2662 (local: 328-8787)
<b>Region VIII:</b>	Mark Jesser	1-888-227-7525

## ND Family Caregiver Coordinators

<b>Region I:</b>	Kayla Fenster	1-800-231-7724
<b>Region II:</b>	Suzanne Effertz	1-888-470-6968
<b>Region III:</b>	Mary Weltz	1-888-607-8610
<b>Region IV:</b>	RaeAnn Johnson	1-888-256-6742
<b>Region V:</b>	Laura Fischer	1-888-342-4900
<b>Region VI:</b>	Danelle Van Zinderen	1-800-260-1310
<b>Region VII:</b>	Bill Willis	1-888-328-2662 (local: 328-8776)
<b>Region VIII:</b>	Rene Schmidt	1-888-227-7525

## Long-Term Care Ombudsman Services

<b>State Ombudsman:</b>	Joan Ehrhardt	1-855-462-5465
<b>Region I &amp; II:</b>	Deb Kraft	1-888-470-6968
<b>Region III &amp; IV:</b>	Kim Helten	1-888-607-8610
<b>Grand Forks:</b>	RaeAnn Johnson	1-888-256-6742
<b>Region V &amp; VI:</b>	Bryan Fredrickson	1-888-342-4900
<b>Region VI &amp; VII:</b>	Shannon Nieuwsma	1-701-391-0563
<b>Region VII:</b>	Shannon Nieuwsma Bill Willis or Joan Ehrhardt	1-701-328-8972 1-855-462-5465
<b>Region VIII:</b>	Mark Jesser	1-888-227-7525

## Aging & Disability Resource LINK (ADRL)

Aging Services Division and Resource Link:

**Options Counseling Services** **1-855-GO2LINK**  
(1-855-462-5465)

## Vulnerable Adult Protective Services

<b>Region I:</b>	Kayla Fenster	1-800-231-7724
<b>Region II:</b>	Niels Anderson	1-701-629-5393 or 628-2925
<b>Region III:</b>	Kim Helten	1-888-607-8610
<b>Region IV:</b>	Bernie Hopman	1-888-256-6742
<b>Region V:</b>	Cass County SS	1-701-241-5747 (Option #2)
<b>Region VI:</b>	Hart Agency	1-701-952-8277
<b>Region VII:</b>	Katie Schafer	1-888-328-2662 (local: 328-8868)
<b>Region VIII:</b>	Rene Schmidt	1-888-227-7525

## Other

AARP:	1-866-554-5383
Mental Health America of ND:	1-701-255-3692
IPAT (Assistive Technology):	1-800-895-4728
Legal Services of North Dakota: or (age 60+):	1-800-634-5263 1-866-621-9886
ND Attorney General's Office of Consumer Protection:	1-701-328-3404 1-800-472-2600
Social Security Administration:	1-800-772-1213
Medicare:	1-800-633-4227
State Health Insurance Counseling (SHIC) ND Insurance Department: Prescription Connection	1-701-328-2440 1-888-575-6611
ND Association for the Disabled NDAD (Serving all of ND)	1-701-795-6605
Alzheimer's Association:	1-701-258-4933 1-800-272-3900
ND Senior Medicare Patrol:	1-800-233-1737



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Phone: 1-701-328-8888  
Toll Free: 1-888-328-2662  
Fax: 1-701-328-8900



**To:**

## **Upcoming Events**

- **Change Your Clocks - - Spring Forward.....March 9, 2014**
- **Region VII Forum on Aging – Bismarck Senior Center.....April 24, 2014**



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

***In a leadership role, Aging Services will actively advocate for individual life choices and develop quality services in response to the needs of vulnerable adults, persons with physical disabilities, and an aging society in North Dakota.***